

STATINTL



# Undercover

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In any creative effort to win the world political war, what place is there for spies? To put the question so baldly seems a betrayal of democratic principle. Yet the survival of democracy may depend partly on its capacity to hold its own in the dark underworld of military and political intelligence.

The spy problem is high on the agenda of things to be solved by the democratic world. The British and the Americans have very different kinds of spy headaches. The British headache, after the recent spate of intelligence leaks, is that of security. The American headache (despite the current Irvin Scarbeck spy case) is not that of security but of the uses to which intelligence material is put.

In the post-Cuban mood of self-examination, several inquiries are being made into the Central Intelligence Agency, to reorganize it and give it new direction. No one can doubt that Allen Dulles' usefulness is over and that he must go. But the more important question is how the CIA functions are to be organized and performed in the future.

If you want a digest of all the critical, damning things that have been written about the CIA, you will find it in a full-scale report by Fred J. Cook (Nation, June 24). Some of the things Cook has culled from the printed sources are valuable when put together, as with his material on CIA operations in Guatemala, Northern Burma, China's offshore islands, and Laos.

But when he tries to prove Allen Dulles's pro-German bias by his ties with German industry, I get the same feeling I do when he trusts that Kennedy is controlled by the "ruling oligarchic circles" of the U. S. and when Cook hints darkly of Dulles as pro-Nazi and anti-Semite, the only result is to make me question his own judgment on other matters.

It is, I fear, a field where someone who depends on writing alone is like a man trying to review a dance recital by watching outside the hall and interviewing someone who has not seen the program notes.

The inquiries into the CIA by Gen. Maxwell Taylor and Arthur Schlesinger at M.I.T. will be more knowledgeable. But they will have to address themselves to the main charge against the CIA, which Cook makes effectively, despite his extraneous material. It is the charge that the CIA has not been content with gathering intelligence, but has gone outside its bailiwick to try to carry through "operations," as in Guatemala, Iran, Cuba, and Laos.

This looks pretty good, until you examine it more closely. At worst all there was to it, then Kennedy's course would be crystal-clear. All he has to do is issue orders to the CIA to stop its knitting, to gather and evaluate intelligence, and to leave the operational side to others.

To whom? The State Department? That only gets the department into trouble when it has to run a secret program of secret operatives, who would be much harder to control than the operatives of an independent spy agency. Or the Joint Chiefs? The same applies to them. They have undercover operational jobs to do. They need a separate agency to do them.

Thus, even if you distinguished between gathering intelligence and operating on it, there must be some agency to do both functions. It must be so organized that the U. S. government is not answerable for it under international law, yet the government is responsible for it to be the American people and the free world, since it is a function that has to be performed.

I suspect that the job will be done best if it is done in a coordinated way. The trouble with the Cuba operation was not that the same men exercised both functions, but that the wrong men did the wrong kind of men.

Any reorganized agency will have to gather the right political intelligence, which requires a type of mind very different from the traditional CIA sleuth. The men who will operate on that intelligence will require the same type of mind. It must understand the nature of the Communist mentality, the power of ideas, the differences between communism and revolutionary nationalism, the power of color in the world to-day, the hold that social reform has upon the masses and elites of the undeveloped nations.

What I am saying is that the U. S. needs, a small group of men to direct the intelligence and strategy of the world political war. These men must guide the undercover work for that political war, along with the open activities which must be openly acknowledged.

I don't care what name is used for these men and their agency, provided they have a clear philosophy and strategy of action which goes beyond military weapons and beyond formal diplomacy. In waging the political war the free world cannot depend on what Henry Lea called "the valor of ignorance."